DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 384 000 CS 012 164

AUTHOR Anderson, Dianna D.
TITLE Moving toward Change: The Literature-Based First-Grade Basals.
PUB DATE Apr 95
NOTE 27p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Awards; *Basal Reading; *Childrens Literature; Comparative Analysis; *Grade 1; *Literature Appreciation; Primary Education; Reading Research; Revision (Written Composition); Textbook Research
IDENTIFIERS Trade Books

ABSTRACT

A study examined literature-based stories found in first-grade student anthologies (basals), the adaptations made to those stories, and any award-winning stories found in that literature. Four current reading series were examined: Houghton Mifflin, Scott Foresman, Macmillan/McGraw Hill, and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. The difference in the proportion of literature-based stories, the differences in the proportion of trade book stories adapted and the types of adaptations, and the difference in the proportion of award-winning literature between the 1987 editions and the 1993 editions were examined. Results indicated that: (1) in 1987, 17% of the stories in the first-grade basals were literature-based, while in 1993 that proportion increased to 87%; (2) in 1987, 92% of the trade book stories in the basal were adapted, with sentence-level adaptions being the most common type, while in 1993, 14% of the trade book stories included in the basal readers included adaptions; and (3) in 1987 and in 1993, only 5% of the total proportion of literature won an award. (Contains 26 references and 5 tables of data.) (RS)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED 384 000

# Moving Toward Change: The Literature-Based First-Grade Basals

Dianna D. Anderson

University of Houston-Victoria

Division of Education

Victoria, TX 77901

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

D Anderson

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Poster session presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association April 18-22, 1995, San Francisco, CA



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ED 384 000

Abstract

This study examined literature-based stories found in first-grade student anthologies (basals), the adaptions made to those stories, and any award-winning stories found in that literature. Four current reading series were examined: Houghton Mifflin, Scott Foresman, Macmillan/McGraw Hill, and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. The findings answered these questions: 1)What is the difference in the proportion of literature-based stories between the 1987 editions of the first-grade basal reading series and the 1993 editions? 2)What is the difference in the proportion of trade book stories adapted and the types of adaptions made between the 1987 first-grade basals and the 1993 first-grade basals? 3)What is the difference in the proportion of award-winning literature between the 1987 editions of first-grade basal reading series and the 1993 editions. This was a descriptive study in which frequency distributions and percentage scores were calculated. Results indicated there were significant differences in the proportion of literature-based stories, and adaptions across the editions. In 1987, 17% of the stories in the first-grade basal were literature-based, while in 1993, that proportion increased to 87%. In 1987, 92% of the trade book stories in the basal were adapted, with sentence adaptions being the most common type. The findings from this study did not indicate a significant difference in the proportion of literature that had won awards between 1987 and 1993. In 1987, only five percent of the total proportion of literature won an award. In 1993, even though there was more literature included in the basal readers, the percentage of award-winners remained the same, at five percent.

# Moving Toward Change: The Literature-Based First-Grade Basals

From the book, Becoming a Nation of Readers to the Recommended Readings in Literature and the English Language-Arts Framework for California Public Schools , literature is again surfacing as the way to teach reading in the classroom. Literature-based instruction includes a wide range of children's literature that is utilized in teaching reading. Research has found that there were significant differences in the affects of using children's literature to teach children to read. (Eldredge & Butterfield, 1984). Incorporating literature into the basal readers has been the focus of the recently published 1993 basals. All of the state adopted 1993 basals reviewed in Texas are literature-based. However, some educators are wary of the stories in the new basal readers because of the heavy adaption to the stories used in basals of the past. In their book, Report Card on Basal Readers, (Goodman, Shannon, Freeman & Murphy, 1988) state that what eventually ends up in the pupil's anthologies is either adapted or specially written. There have been several studies that have investigated adaptions included in basal readers. Comas' (1987) study found that language changes accounted for 64% of what she describes as adaptations. These adaptations included synonym substitutions and deleting descriptive word phrases. Shen's (1991) study analyzed five basal reading series that included literary selections to determine whether they had changed either in content or language as compared to the trade book version. Her results indicated that all five series made substantial changes to the literature that was used for the basal. Most of the significant change were deletions used to simplify sentences and paragraphs. Prior to 1993, this research shows that adaptions to stories, such as simplifying the vocabulary, are made to fit the criteria for a specific grade level. A result of adapting the basals is

that the material becomes bland. Bettelheim & Zelan (1982), Thomas (1987), and Ammon & Sherman (1991) state that basal reading material is empty, meaningless and that it bored children.

Another area of study is the award-winning literature found in the basal readers. Huck, Helper & Hickman (1987) state that award-winning literature provides a criteria for what is considered the best in children's literature. These awards are based not on popularity, but on recognized excellence. Norton (1991) states that reading and discussing reviews of excellent books and literary criticism , can increase one's ability to recommend excellent literature for children. Again, Comas' (1987) study indicated that from the 1970's to 1980's, the percentage of award-winning stories included in eight basal reading programs at grades two, five, and seven, has more than doubled, from 12% to 27%.

In the past, evaluations of basal reading series have suggested using less tightly controlled stories, usually written by the publishing companies to fit a readability formula. These suggestions included using children's literature in the anthologies and eliminating the need for adaptions. Studies of the past have illustrated how adaptions have affected the literature in the basals. The dissertations that were published in 1991 and 1992 Sanders, Shen, & Smith compared basals from the years 1987 and 1989. Although these studies have indicated that the basals have made some progress in using literature with fewer adaptions, we need as researchers to become aware of the changes the publishers have made in the last four years.

## Method

This study addressed the following research questions: 1) What is the difference in the proportion of literature-based stories between the 1987 editions of the first- grade basal reading series and the 1993 editions? 2)What is the difference in the proportion of trade book stories adapted and the types of adaptions made between the 1987 first-grade basals and the 1993 first-grade basals? 3)What is the difference in the proportion of award-winning literature between the 1987 editions of the first-grade basal reading series and the 1993 editions? Materials examined included four basal reading series: Houghton Mifflin (1986; 1993), Scott Foresman (1987; 1993), Macmillan/McGraw Hill (1987; 1993), and Harcourt Brace Jovanovich (1987; 1993). These series were chosen because they claimed to have changed their series and are now literature-based, as mandated by the Texas Education Agency. These four series along with Silver Burdett and Ginn are the only state purchased textbooks adopted by Texas for use in the public schools. Silver Burdett and Ginn was not included in this study since the 1991 series had been evaluated by Smith in her dissertation (1991/1992). Only the first-grade reading series were used in this study. First-grade was chosen because in the past, stories with the most adaptions occurred at this grade level. Also, there have been more stories used at this grade level that were written specifically for the basal.

## Procedure

For research question one, the total number of literature-based stories was counted for each basal reading series. To be counted as literature-based, the story in the anthology had to also be found in a trade book. All of the 190 trade books were located and utilized in this study. This

included the 38 literature-based stories in 1987 and the 152 literature-based stories in the 1993 series.

For research question two, line by line comparisons were made between the trade book and the story in the basal reader to determine the types and number of adaptions for each basal reading series. Defined categories of adaptions included: 1)page adaption - one or more pages of text in the literature-based story is added or omitted from the basal reader. 2)paragraph adaption - changes made in the literature-based story that involve simplifying, adding or deleting one or more paragraphs before being included in the basal reader. 3)sentence adaption - changes made in the literature-based story that involve deleting, substituting, adding, splitting or combining sentences before being included in the basal reader. 4)word adaption - changes made in the literature-based story by adding, replacing or omitting one or more words or phrases for another. 5)punctuation adaption - changes made in the literature-based story such as replacing original punctuation marks or capitalization. Punctuation adaptions are not counted in the same sentence when a sentence adaption is counted. Punctuation marks which are usually found in pairs are counted as one adaption. One punctuation adaption is counted for each letter that changes from upper to lower case, or lower to upper case. 6) Other - changes made in the literature-based story included in the basal reader that do not belong to one of these specific categories.

For question number three, the total number of selections representing award-winning literature was counted for each basal reading series. To be considered award-winning literature, the award had to be based on a committee and not on popularity. For example: Jones (1983) states that the committee members for the Newbery award included eight elected and seven appointed members of the Association for Library Services to Children of the American Library

Association. To be counted as an award-winning trade book, the book had to receive one of the following awards: Boston Globe Horn Book Awards, Randolph Caldecott Medal, John Newbery Medal, Coretta Scott King Awards, Kate Greenaway Medal, International Reading Association Children's Book Awards, Children's Book Award and Ezra Jack Keats New Writer Award. The study also included honor, commended and discontinued awards.

Reliability of this study was established by using four independent raters that were trained to recognize the different adaption categories. Ten books were selected by a random drawing. Five books from the 1987 series and five more from the 1993 series. Interrater reliability was established with a 91% agreement on coding the categories.

## Results and Conclusions

### Literature-based stories by publisher and year.

Results indicated there was a significant difference among the proportion of literature-based stories by publisher in 1987 and 1993 . In 1987, only 17% of the total 230 stories were literature-based. For 1993, there were a total of 152 stories. Of these 152 stories 87% were literature-based. This is a significant increase in the number of literature-based stories. Results indicated that in 1987, Houghton Mifflin had the highest proportion of stories that were literature-based. Of the 45 stories, 15 or 33% were literature-based. Scott Foresman did not include any literature-based stories in their 1987 first- grade basals. In 1993, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich had the highest proportion of literature-based first-grade basals. All of the 35 literature-based stories could be found in a trade book version of the same story. Scott Foresman had included the lowest proportion of literature-based stories for 1993. Of the 37 stories included in their basals, 24 or 65% were literature-based.

---

Insert Table 1 about here

---

Trade book stories that have been adapted by publisher and year.

Results indicated a significant difference among the total number of adaptions in the trade book stories by publisher in 1987 and 1993.

In 1987, 92% of the trade book stories found in the basal included adaptions. In 1993, 14% of the trade book stories included in the basal readers included adaptions. In 1987, Houghton Mifflin had the highest proportion of adapted . All of their 1987 literature-based stories were adapted. In 1993, only 14% of the trade book stories found in the basal included adaptions. this is a significant decrease in the number of adaptions. Scott Foresman had the highest proportion of adapted trade book stories, which was 5 or 21%. Of the six types of adaptions included in this study, sentence adaptions accounted for most of the total types of adaptions for 1987 as indicated by Table 3. In 1993, punctuation adaptions accounted for most of the types of adaptions as indicated by Table 4.

---

Insert Table 2 about here

---

Insert Table 3 about here

Insert Table 4 about here

Literature presented in basals that has won awards by publisher and year.

By the researcher's definition of an award-winning story, Macmillan was the only 1987 first-grade basal to include award-winning literature. (2 out of 7 total) In 1993, even though the number of literature-based stories had increased, the total number of award-winning literature included the first-grade basals was six, still accounting for only 5% of the literature-based stories. Therefore, while the percentage of award-winning literature has not changed between 1987 and 1993, the number of award-winning stories has increased.

Insert Table 5 about here

Overall, these results indicate that literature-based readers have become a focus of reading instruction. Norton (1992) states that renewed interest in teaching with children's literature is attributed in part to the fact that the content of what is read is as important as the process of teaching reading. The 1993 literature-based basals contain lively stories, such as Alphabet Soup by Anne Shelby, in which children bring to the table all sorts of delightful things that start with their letter of the alphabet. Or Parade by Harriet Ziefert in which children read sounds such as that of a circus drum. Obviously, whether for profit or by awareness of the research, publishers agree that including literature-based stories is important otherwise there would not be such a significant increase in the number of literature-based stories in the 1993 basal readers.

The 1993 first-grade basals also contain fewer adaptions than the 1987 basals. Language no longer needs to be controlled. It is hard for language to be predictable if it is being controlled and changed. Goodman (1988) states that when you control the vocabulary and syntax the style and wit of the original is lost. In 1993, only 14% of the total proportion of stories were adapted as compared to 92% in 1987. Since the proportion of adaptions have been greatly reduced, we can conclude that adapting the basals is not as important as it once was. Like an artist who paints a picture, children's authors are writers who are considered knowledgeable in their field. To change their stories to almost unreadable text is destroying a meaningful relationship between the child and the text. A piece of art is not dismantled and pieces removed just because the person may find the work too difficult to understand.

In selecting literature to be included in basal readers, some stories are described as award-winning literature. These selections represent a model of literary excellence by which other books are judged. We, as educators, should strive for quality in the types of selections chosen for

inclusion in the basal. The quality of a book is judged by inclusion and exclusion of certain elements. If children have been provided a model of literary excellence, then they will be able to distinguish between the outstanding and the mediocre. Not all literature children read should be award-winning, but enough should be included so that children can become aware of the characteristics of good literature.

It is evident from this study that publishers are including more literature-based selections in their basal readers, and fewer of these stories have been adapted. This is a positive change for basals. But, more award winning literature needs to be included. Publishers are still using the practice of advertising an award won by the author, but it may not be that particular story that is included in the basal reader. Publishers should make every effort to clearly state which stories have won awards so as to avoid misleading either the educators or readers.

Since the text includes more literature-based stories with very few adaptions, the stories can be used as sets of literature in the classroom. Teachers can now utilize the basal readers to add to their collection of literature in the classroom. The stories can be implemented into thematic units or core, extended and recreational recommended readings. For beginning teachers who may not have experience with literature-based instruction or who do not have access to literature in their classrooms, these basal readers may be especially beneficial in implementing literature-based instruction.

Since 50 to 75% of teachers still use basals in the classroom for reading instruction (Wiseman 1992), it is important that we continue to look at what the publishers of basal reading series have to present. As shown by this study, basal publishers have increased the number of literature-based

stories in their 1993 basals readers. One area that could still be improved is the amount of award-winning literature included in the basals.

## References

Abrahamson, R.F., Church, E.B., Coulter, B.B., Crim, A.A., Cullinan, B.E., Farr, R.C., Gallego, M.A., Hammond, W.D., Hilliard, A.G., III, Hinojosa-Smith, R.R., Hopkins, L.B., Irvin, J.L., Kutiper, K., Sternberg, R.J. & Strickland, D.S. (1993). Harcourt Brace Jovanovcih reading program. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Allington, R.L., Blachowicz, C., Cramer, R.L., Cunningham, P.M., Perez, G.Y., Robinson, C.F., Sebesta, S.L., Smith, R.G. & Tierney, R.J. (1987). Scott Foresman reading program. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.

Allington, R.L., Askew, B.J., Blachowicz, C., Butler, A., Cole, J. Edwards, P.A., Gonzalez, G.A., Harris, V.J., Carter-Hutchinson, S.M., Morrow, L.M., Sebesta, S.L., Sulzby, E., & Tierney, R.J. (1993). Scott Foresman reading program. Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.

Alsin, M.L., Au, K., Barrera, R.B., Bean, R.M., Brzeinski, J.E., Estrada, F.X., Glaser, N.A., Greenlaw, M.J., Hillerich, R.L., Johnson, T.G., Mason, P.A., Pilulski, J.J. & Schoephoerster, H. (1986). Houghton Mifflin reading program. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Ammon, B.D. & Sherman, G.W. (1991). Handbook for the Newbery medal and honor book, 1980-1989. Hagerstown, MD: Alleyside Press.

Anderson, R.C., Hiebert, E.H., Scott, J.A. & Wilkinson, I.A. (1985). Becoming a nation of readers: The report of the commission on reading. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Education.

Aoki, E.M., Arnold, V.A., Flood, J., Hoffman, J.V., Lapp, D., Martinez, M., Palincsar, A.S., Priestley, M., Roser, N., Smith, C.B., Teale, W.H., Tinajero, J.V., Webb, A.W., Williams, P.W. & Wood, K.D. (1993). Macmillan/McGraw Hill reading program. New York: Macmillan/McGraw Hill.

Arnold, V.A., Glazer, J.I. & Lippert, M.H. (1987). Macmillan reading program. New York: Macmillan.

Au, K.H., Barrera, R.B., Bradley, E., Bunyan, R.P., Chaparro, J.L., Comas, J.C., Cooper, J.D., Crawford, A.N., Durr, W.K., Greenlaw, M.J., Hillerich, R.L., Johnson, T.G., Lipson, M.Y., Mason, J.M., Mason, P.A., Nagy, W.E., Page, S.E., Renzulli, J.S., Schifini, A., Valencia, S.W. & Wixson, K.K. (19913). Houghton Mifflin reading program. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Bettelheim, B. & Zelan, K. (1982). On learning to read: The child's fascination with meaning. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

California State Department of Education. (1986). Recommended readings in literature: Kindergarten through grade eight. Sacramento, CA: State Department of Education.

Comas, J.C. (1987). Adaptations: Award-winning children's literature found in basal textbook readers. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington.

Eldredge, J.L. & Butterfield, D. (1984). Sacred cows make good hamburger: A report on a reading research project. Provo, UT: Brigham Young University. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 255 861).

Cullinan, B.E., Early, M., Farr, R.C., Hammond, W.D., Santeusanio, N. & Strickland, D. (1987). Harcourt Brace Jovanovich reading program. Orlando, FL: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Goodman, K.S., Shannon, P., Freeman, Y.S. & Murphy, S. (1988). Report card on basal readers. Katonah, NY: Richard C. Owen.

Huck, C.S., Helper, S., & Hickman, J. (1987). Children's literature in the elementary school (4th ed.). NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Jones, D.B. (1983). Children's literature awards and winners: A directory of prizes, authors and illustrators. Detroit, MI: Neal-Schuman Publishers.

Norton, D. (1992). The impact of literature-based reading. NY: Macmillan.

Norton, D. (1991). Through the eyes of a child. (3rd ed.). Columbus: Merrill.

Sanders, K.C. (1992). An evaluation of basal reader adaptions of an original text (Doctoral dissertation, Kansas State University, 1991). Dissertation Abstracts International, 52, 10A. (University Microfilms No. 92-01021)

Shelby, A. (1991). Potluck. New York: Orchard Books.

Shen, W. (1992). Synthetic texts or authentic literature: An examination of basal reading series (Doctoral dissertation, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, 1991). Dissertation Abstract International, 52, 03A. (University Microfilms No. 91-23974)

Smith, N.B. (1992). A descriptive analysis of the content in three basal readers (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Arizona, 1991). Dissertation Abstracts International, 52, 07A. (University Microfilms No. 92-39957)

Thomas, J.R. (1987). Books in the classroom: Unweaving the rainbow. The Horn Book Magazine, 63, 782-787.

Wiseman, D.L. (1992). Learning to read with literature. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Ziefert, H. (1990). Parade. New York: Bantam Books.

**Table 1** Literature-based stories, publisher by year

| Year | Publisher | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Harcourt Brace Jovanovich | Houghton Mifflin | Macmillan | Scott Foresman | Average |
| 1987 | 25% (16/64) | 33% (15/45) | 13% (7/56) | 0% (0/65) | 17% (38/230) |
| 1993 | 100% (35/35) | 88% (44/50) | 97% (29/30) | 65% (24/37) | 87% (132/152) |

Note. The numbers in the parenthesis indicate the number of literature-based stories, and the total number of stories.

**Table 2** Trade book stories by publisher that have been adapted in the years 1987 and 1993

| | Publishers | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | Harcourt Brace Jovanovich | Houghton Mifflin | Macmillan | Scott Foresman | Average |
| 1987 | 94% (15/16) | 100% (15/15) | 71% (5/7) | 0% (0/0) | 92% (35/38) |
| 1993 | 11% (4/35) | 14% (6/24) | 10% (3/29) | 21% (5/24) | 14% (18/132) |

Note. There were no literature-based stories included in the 1987 Scott Foresman first- grade basals. The numbers in the parenthesis indicate the number with adaptions, and the total number of stories.

**Table 3** Summary of 1987 adaptions

| Basal | No. of Stories | Para. Adapt. | Vocab. Adapt. | Sent. Adapt. | Page Adapt. | Punc. Adapt. | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Harcourt Brace Jovanovich | 16 | 1 | 243 | 471 | 117 | 38 | 2 | 872 |
| Houghton Mifflin | 15 | 8 | 351 | 835 | 30 | 15 | 0 | 1,239 |
| Macmillan | 7 | 1 | 73 | 114 | 35 | 4 | 0 | 227 |
| Scott Foresman | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Totals | | 10 | 667 | 1,420 | 182 | 57 | 2 | 2,338 |

**Table 4** Summary of 1993 adaptions

| Basals | No. of Stories | Para. Adapt. | Vocab. Adapt. | Sent. Adapt. | Page Adapt. | Punc. Adapt. | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Harcourt Brace Jovanovich | 35 | 0 | 7 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 1 | 20 |
| Houghton Mifflin | 44 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 20 | 10 | 1 | 37 |
| Macmillan/ McGraw Hill | 29 | 0 | 9 | 6 | 0 | 42 | 0 | 57 |
| Scott Foresman | 24 | 0 | 3 | 14 | 16 | 12 | 0 | 45 |
| Total | | 0 | 24 | 21 | 48 | 64 | 2 | 159 |

**Table 5** Literature presented in basals that has won an award in the years 1987 and 1993 by publisher

| Year | Publisher | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Harcourt Brace Jovanovich | Houghton Mifflin | Macmillan | Scott Foresman | Average |
| 1987 | 0% (0/16) | 0% (0/15) | 29% (2/7) | 0% (0/0) | 5% (2/38) |
| 1993 | 9% (3/35) | 0% (0/44) | 3% (1/29) | 8% (2/24) | 5% (6/132) |

Note. There were no literature-based stories included in the 1987 Scott Foresman first-grade basals.